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E.O. 12065:N/A

TAGS: SREF

SUBJECT: AFGHAN REFUGEE HEALTH SITUATION

1. WE HAVE HAD OPPORTUNITY TO RECEIVE DEBRIEFING FROM DR. GRIFFIN; IT FINDS THAT MORE PROGRESS SHOULD BE MADE BY THE GOP IN DEVELOPING A COORDINATED PLAN OF ACTION TO COPE WITH THE AFGHAN REFUGEE HEALTH SITUATION.

2. IT SEEMS TO US THAT THE BEST COURSE OF ACTION IS TO IDENTIFY A SET OF HEALTH PRIORITIES AND CONTINUE TO PUSH WITH THE UNHCR AND THE GOP TO SEE THAT THESE PRIORITIES ARE ATTENDED TO -- AS WELL AS BE SENSITIVE TO AND SUPPORTIVE OF THE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES WHO CAN ADDRESS THOSE NEEDS. IN THIS REGARD, THE EXPANSION OF CHURCH INTER AID COMMITTEE'S HEALTH ACTIVITIES IN THE NWFP COMES TO MIND.

3. ACCORDING TO DR. GRIFFIN, THE GOP SHOULD DEVELOP A PLAN OF ACTION WHICH CONCENTRATES ON THE FOLLOWING AREAS LISTED BELOW BY PRIORITY:

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A. SURVEILLANCE: IDEALLY THE GOP WOULD DEVELOP A SYSTEM

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WHICH MONITORS THE MORBIDITY/MORTALITY SITUATION IN THE CAMPS. WE UNDERSTAND THAT ICRC MAY BE GETTING INVOLVED IN THE HEALTH PICTURE AND THEY COULD BE QUITE HELPFUL IN ASSISTING THE GOP EITHER SET UP OR IMPLEMENT A SURVEILLANCE PROGRAM. THE UNHCR PROPOSAL TO SET A SYSTEM OF NURSE SCOUTS GOING INTO THE CAMPS TO PERFORM OUTREACH MIGHT INCLUDE SOME FORM OF NUTRITION SURVEILLANCE.

B. OUTREACH: SINCE THE MEN AND MALE CHILDREN WILL RECEIVE PRIORITY ATTENTION FROM THE DISPENSARIES AND MOBILE MEDICAL UNITS, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT PROGRAMS BE DEVELOPED TO REACH THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN THE CAMPS. KOHAUT'S NURSE SCOUT PROGRAM MAY BE THE MOST REALISTIC METHOD OF ACHIEVING THIS OBJECTIVE. IF THE GOP WERE WILLING TO PERMIT FOREIGN MEDICAL PERSONNEL ASSIGNED TO VOLUNTARY AGENCIES, THIS MIGHT BE EXPEDITED.

C. INCREASED NUMBERS OF DISPENSARIES: THERE IS A DEFINITE NEED FOR MORE TENT DISPENSARIES IN THE CAMPS AND TO MAKE SURE THAT DISPENSARIES ARE ADEQUATELY STOCKED AND STAFFED WITH QUALIFIED PERSONNEL. IF THE UNHCR OR ICRC ARE ABLE TO IDENTIFY THE OPTIMUM NUMBER OF DISPENSARIES AND REQUIRED STAFF AND SUPPLIES, THEN EITHER THE UNHCR -- OR THE DONORS COULD PERIODICALLY MEASURE GOP PROGRESS -- AGAINST THE NUMBERS OF DISPENSARIES IN PLACE AND FUNCTIONING.

D. MOBILE MEDICAL UNITS: AS WE SEE IT, THE MAIN PURPOSE OF THESE UNITS IS TO ATTEND TO REMOTE AREAS WHICH ARE NOT RECEIVING HEALTH CARE. BECAUSE OF THEIR MOBILITY, THEY COULD PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN ALSO HELPING TO IDENTIFY

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POTENTIALLY CRITICAL AREAS. THIS IS AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY TO UTILIZE THE RUPEES WHICH WE WILL ADDRESS SEPTEL.

E. VACCINATION: WHILE WE REALIZE THAT A MEASLES CAMPAIGN REQUIRES PERSONNEL AND TECHNOLOGY (I.E. -THE COLD CHAIN), WE FEEL THAT THE UNHCR HAS TO PUSH HARD ON THE ISSUE. PERHAPS THE GOP WOULD BE WILLING TO PERMIT A FOREIGN TEAM TO COME IN FOR A FINITE PERIOD OF TIME TO UNDERTAKE THIS ACTIVITY.

4. WE SUGGEST YOU PASS THIS CABLE ONTO KOHAUT AND GET

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HIS THOUGHTS ON THE BEST WAY TO PUSH FOR ACTION IN THE ABOVE PRIORITY AREAS. IT IS PARAMOUNT THAT WE DO EVERYTHING WE CAN TO AVOID A HEALTH CRISIS IN THE REFUGEE CAMPS. THE THOUGHTS IN THIS CABLE ARE OBVIOUSLY ONLY A FIRST STEP -- BUT WE FEEL AN IMPORTANT STEP TOWARDS ESTABLISHING A PLAN OF ACTION AND SOME CRITERIA WE CAN USE TO MEASURE GOP AND UNHCR PROGRESS IN BOTH MEETING PRESENT HEALTH NEEDS AND AVOIDING A MORE SERIOUS PROBLEM.

5. PERHAPS A GOOD FORUM FOR DISCUSSING THIS PLAN OF ACTION WOULD BE A MEETING WITH GOP OFFICIALS TO GET THEIR REACTION TO DR. GRIFFIN'S HEALTH REPORT WHICH WAS GIVEN TO THE GOP.
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